

## *Håkan got financial aid for a specialist treatment*

**Håkan Persson suffered his entire life from a severe hand sweat. After a surgery, which should solve the problem, Håkan got instead side effects in form of heavily increased sweating over his entire torso. Thanks to a financial aid for a special treatment by a Social Fund he could do a reversal surgery to restore the neural pathways.**

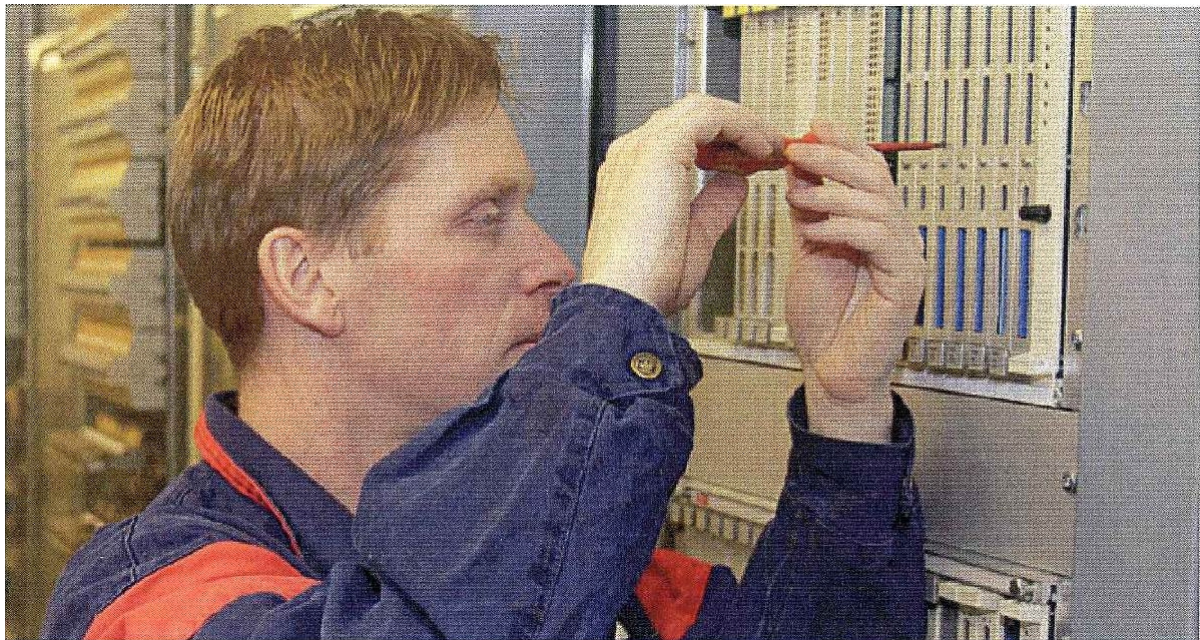


Foto: Per-Anders Sjocquist

As long as Håkan can remember he has got problems with heavy hand sweating. In the childhood he was not that conscious of it, but at an adult age this became a real problem. At work it proved to be difficult to grasp a screwdriver without it slipping from the hand, also his social life became all the more tough.

### **THE SURGERY LED TO SIDE EFFECTS**

In the beginning of the 90ies there was a report in the TV that the burden could be resolved with a surgery. Håkan contacted Sundsvall Hospital and was readily referred to Borås hospital, where the surgery was performed in 1995. The method was called

ETS (Endoscopic Thoracic Sympathicomy), which was a common method for the most in the 90ies. Around 3000 persons were operated on using this method.

The surgery was a success for the hand sweat. However, some weeks after the surgery he began to suffer from heavy sweating over the entire torso as a side effect. This became an even bigger problem than the original hand sweat had been. Håkan then sought help by the Doctor who performed the original surgery and then in the health care center, but they had little understanding for his problem. According to them there just did not exist any help whatsoever. Ten

years of his everyday life was tinged of planning how he could dress for not sweating through the shirts and pull-overs and how many changes of cloths he had to take with him for the day.

### **THE WHOLE BODY WAS AFFECTED**

- My life became enormously limited, Håkan says. I avoided some activities; even a walk or a bike ride downtown was practically unthinkable.

The side effects affected his whole body and health. In addition to the sweating he had difficulties in maintaining the warmth in his body, despite of sweating he could be freezing, a bit like when

one is ill and has cold sweat. Even his pulse rate was lowered by the surgery, which is one of the known side effects of this surgery.

Finally the problem became so unbearable that Håkan contacted a psychologist. She gave good tips on finding a Doctor in Europe who could make a reversal surgery to this ETS. Then finally Håkan found by surfing in Internet a private clinic, where he could get help. After having contacted the clinic and some of the patients, who had already done this reversal surgery, he decided to take the surgery despite its high cost.

The surgery was to be performed in Italy, so in addition to the costs of the surgery came the costs for the flight ticket and hotel.

#### **FINANCIAL AID FROM A SOCIAL FUND**

- I didn't know that the Social Fund had financial aid for special treatment, which could be applied for, Håkan admits, it wasn't until I told my superiors about the surgery and my need to get vacation for the surgery, when I heard that such an aid was available. My boss then helped me in the application, and after a rapid handling by the

Personal Foundation and the Health Care I received the financial aid.

In March 2005 the surgery was performed. The effects of the surgery come gradually, but already now Håkan can tell the difference.

- Now can I be warm without beginning to sweat, Håkan tells, I don't need anymore to plan everything but can act more spontaneously.

**EVALENA ERICSSON**

#### **SEVERE HAND SWEAT**

Severe hand sweat, or Hyperhidrosis like it is called in medical terms, is very hard for the one affected and it can be taken as a severe handicap.

The surgical method ETS (Endoscopic Thoracic Sympathicotomy) means a keyhole surgery within the chest cavity through tiny openings under the arm, where the sympathetic nerves are cut. The method is controversial and many patients get side effects like compensatory sweating, lowered stamina, drooping eyelid (Horner's syndrome) and diverse pains.

The nerve can be restored by a surgical method of recutting the destroyed nerve ends and then uniting them with a fresh nerve graft. Due to the old nerves being already resected, the former hand sweat problem will remain cured. Only a few Doctor in Europe can do the surgery.

#### **HERE'S HOW YOU CAN APPLY TO THE FINANCIAL AID FOR SPECIAL CARE**

- All SCA-personnel in Sweden can apply
- Financial aid can be applied when the waiting time for the public health care means a prolonged sick leave and the return to the previous work is endangered
- Application will be monitored for rehabilitation according to the laws of the work environment and must be recommended by the health care system of the company and its rehabilitation group
- The employee having the aid has to pay 2000 Swedish Crowns as excess
- The financial aid was introduced in 2002 and since 20 employees have received it. Nearly 1 million Crowns has been paid
- If you want to apply – contact the health care of your company